This is our VVRC REPEATER print version An expanded online version is available by free subscription http://users.cwnet.com/hewbob/vvrc/vvrcnews.htm

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB

VACAVILLE, CALIFORNIA

REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER
REPEATER

February 2008

Message from the President

By Jerry Olive, KD6WKY

First off, I want to congratulate our newest Amateur Extra Class Radio Amateur Skip Lawson AF6HC for passing his Extra Class exam on the first try. Outstanding! Skip has been studying for this test for a few months and the effort was rewarded a few weeks ago with a successful exam result.

I think I can add that Jerry KG6TT had a hand in this success story. Jerry KG6TT spent many hours mentoring Skip at his home during the dark cold evenings of November and December to help Skip earn the license. I too have benefited from Jerry's knowledge. Thanks Jerry KG6TT!

We have had an interesting New Year so far. In the DX world we have a new entity to work. In late December Saint Barthelemy became FJ. Interestingly, FJ was immediately on the air with Martti Lane at FJ/OH2AM. Tom N6AJR, Jerry KG6TT and I worked him among many others.

I received an interesting QSL card in the mail last week. You may remember SuitSat-1 which was in orbit from February 3, 2006 to February 18, 2006. That was the old space suit that was stuffed with dirty laundry and retrofitted with a 2m transmitter and a looping FM transmission. Then it was pushed out the door of the International Space Station!

You could go to their website and get tracking information so you'd know when it was going to make a pass over your area. I did just that and knew it was going to pass over my area one morning about the time I drove to work. I set my mobile rig on the frequency and listened as I drove from VV to FF. Sure enough, as I was pulling into my parking space there it was. I heard SuitSat-1 broadcasting away in English, French, German, and probably many other languages.

I went to the website and logged it in with my grid, then sent them an SASE suitable for an 8 1/2" x 11" certificate. Well...I got the certificate last week in the mail. It's perfect for my, "I Love Me!" wall. That's the wall with all your awards and plaques you have to show everyone you're special. :) I keep all my company awards in the garage, all my amateur radio awards in the house. What does that tell you?

Army MARS and Navy MARS have some really good websites you can use to send MARSgrams to service members around the world. You can send MARSgrams to ships at sea too. You get a confirmation telling you your message has been delivered.

In the past few months I have been sending MARSgrams to servicemen I know around the world. One of them is 25 year old Army 2LT Rusty Thompson with A Company, 519th Military Intelligence Battalion in Iraq at Camp Victory. I've known Rusty since he was a kid, he use to come over to our house all the time and break things. Now he's an Intel Officer bridging the Arabic language barrier in the neighborhoods of Baghdad after his infantry team secures the location(s). Rusty then talks to everyone in the neighborhood from the kids to the grandparents to see what's going on. He keeps a hip pocket full of candy for the kids as part of his basic load.

Because he's been accepted by the locals, Rusty has been able to learn of some very important Intel that has saved lives. Knowing where the bad guys are in advance makes a big difference when it comes to urban patrols.

A graduate of the Virginia Military Institute, Rusty tells me the locals laugh at him because he speaks Arabic with an Egyptian accent, his step dad is from Egypt. Rusty says it's similar to listening to someone speak English with a southern accent, you can understand them, it's just different. He's learning the local dialect daily.

Rusty gets my MARSgrams regularly and tells me they are hand delivered. I'll be sending Rusty MARSgrams regularly until he returns from his 15 month tour to Fort Bragg, SC sometime in early 2009.

If you know anyone deployed worldwide, I recommend sending them a MARSgram. If you want to know the websites to use, email me at KD6WKY@arrl.net and I'll send you the links.

I'll see you at the club meeting this week. We will be talking about MARS and how it works. See you then. 73!

IN THIS ISSUE

Message from the President……1
January Meeting Minutes……..……2
Field Day 2008……2
Satellite Serves as Voice Repeater……..3
59 Years Later, I found my Elmer……..3
Her 1st Field Day: One Woman's Adventure…..4
Kartoon Korner……5
Membership Application……..5

Vaca Valley Radio Club Meeting Notes of Wed. 9 Jan., 2ØØ8

Club President Jerry Olive (KD6WKY), started off the new year by calling the January, 2ØØ8, general membership meeting of the Vaca Valley Radio Club to order at 193Ø hours, with the following members and guests in attendance:

Jerry Olive	KD6WKY	Mike Vieira	W6MAV
Skip Lawson	AF6HC	Bob Hewitt	K6HEW
Antonio DelRio	N6ZGB	Ruff Gunn	K6DME
Clyde Hood	WH6AB	Kim Ware	KI6JNX
Jim Blaylock	KI6KBZ	Tom Christman	KE6MDM
Donald Thomas	AB6LT	Charlotte Thomas	XYL
George Vidal	KK4XU	Allan Johnson	KI6KCQ

Since no changes were necessary to the Dec. meeting notes, it was motioned/seconded and voted to accept the notes as published in the newsletter.

Our Treasurer, Bob (K6HEW), reported that our end-of-year totals stood at: $83Ø.43 in the General fund; $616.47 in the Repeater fund; $216.ØØ in the Prize fund; and $43.ØØ in the ARRL fund.

OLD BUSINESS: None addressed.

NEW BUSINESS:

The membership was reminded that Solar Cycle #24 *officially* began Jan. 4th., and it's anticipated to be a real "doozie" this time! So if you've ever thought of getting on HF, now's the time to get those antennas up and tweaked, because the propagation can only get better - just ask the three "DX'cateers" – Jerry (KD6WKY), Jerry (KG6TT), and Tom (N6AJR)!

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB—2008!
ELECTED OFFICERS

President: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Vice President: Mike Vieira, W6MAV
Secretary: Skip Larson, KC6BXN
Treasurer: Bob Hewitt, W6HEW

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Director: Mike Carney, N6SEE
Director: Chris Jones, KD7TQO
Director: Antonio Del Rio, N6ZGB
Director: Tom Christman, KE6MDM
Director: Clyde Hood, WH6AB

APPOINTED POSITIONS

Net Control Chairperson: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Activities Chairperson: Clyde Hood, WH6AB
Newsletter Editor: Jerry Olive, KD6WKY
Newsletter Publisher & Distributor: Bob Hewitt, K6HEW

Our Treasurer, Bob, brought a motion to the floor that we use what funds we presently hold in the ARRL category for a one-time gift certificate (to HRO??) to be raffled at an upcoming meeting, and in the future, rather than the club keep $2 from the ARRL renewals done through the club, that we reduce the VVRC+ARRL joint renewal total by $2, passing the savings on to the members. The motion was second/passed.

Pres. Jerry shared with the membership that he had talked with Diane Phelps, wife of Roy (K6ZU – SK) regarding some of Roy's equipment. He said that he will be taking a couple of board members with him to survey Roy's gear and we would try to auction some of it, giving the proceeds to Diane. He would also like to have some men volunteer to help close up Roy's station for the last time - dismantle the tower, antennas, roll up coax, etc. More to follow…

V.P. Mike (W6MAV) is looking for ideas for future presentations at our monthly meetings. If you have an idea, or know of someone who you could get to be a guest speaker, or if you have an area of specialty that you can share with the membership – please contact Mike at w6mav@arrl.net. As Mike reminded us – this is OUR club, and it's up to US to keep it running!

Our activities Chair - Clyde (WH6AB) reminded the membership that it's not too early to start thinking about this year's Christmas dinner. If we want to change the location to another restaurant, we really ought to start looking now. Just remember that we need a "banquet room" that can seat the two-dozen or so folks that usually attend. One suggestion was perhaps the "Kings Table" in Vacaville (?). Got an idea? Let Clyde know!

Before the evening's special presentation, we held both the Christmas drawing that had been postponed, and the evening's drawing. Our President – Jerry (KD6WKY) won the Christmas drawing, and Kim Ware (KI6JNX) won the evening's drawing.

We concluded the evening by viewing an ARRL video on Emergency Communications.

So, once again, with the cookies and coffee all gone and no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 2Ø18hr.

Respectfully submitted,

"*Skip*" Lawson AF6HC Formerly KC6BXN

Field Day 2008 Rules

It's that time of year again -- time to start gearing up for Field Day, ARRL's flagship operating event. Field Day, held the fourth full weekend in June, brings together new and experienced hams for 24 hours of operating fun. ARRL Field Day Manager Dan Henderson, N1ND, says there are several rules changes this year, mainly concerning "Get on the Air" (GOTA) stations and the elimination of the Demonstration Mode Bonus Category. The complete Field Day Packet can be downloaded from the ARRL Web site. A full 2008 Field Day page on the ARRL Web site will be coming in the next few weeks.

2008 Rules Changes

GOTA (Get on the Air) stations are those stations set aside by Field Day teams designed to get non-hams or newly licensed hams on the air. Unlike in past years where GOTA stations were limited to only the HF bands, the 2008 rules state that these stations may operate on any authorized HF or VHF Field Day band. Keep in mind that only one signal may be transmitted from the GOTA station at any time.

Henderson said the eligibility for operating the GOTA station has changed slightly: Anyone who has been licensed since Field Day 2007 is eligible to operate the GOTA station, regardless of license class.

For 2008, the Demonstration Mode Bonus category has been eliminated and replaced by an Educational Activity Bonus worth 100 points. "This bonus is intended to encourage clubs and groups to do some more formal educational activity during their Field Day operation," Henderson said. If you have any questions concerning what activities might be appropriate for this bonus, Henderson said you should submit them via e-mail.

Be sure to read the Field Day rules and FAQs in the 2008 Field Day Packet for details of these changes. There are also numerous small changes in the FAQs and support materials in the packet that should help groups and individuals as they plan their Field Day activities, Henderson said.

Get the Word Out!

The 2008 Field Day Packet also includes an expanded Press Kit, thanks to the work of ARRL Media and Public Relations Manager Allen Pitts, W1AGP. Included in this expanded portion of the packet is a sample "Field Day Proclamation" for those groups who work with local city or town officials toward getting a Field Day Week declared in their location.

"We are excited that historic station K6KPH will once again participate transmitting the W1AW special Field Day Bulletin on the West Coast," Henderson said. More details are available in the Field Day Packet.

Information concerning the popular Field Day pins and T shirts will be announced in the next few weeks.

Henderson said that those wishing to obtain a complete Field Day Packet via US mail need to send a 9 x 12 inch self-addressed, stamped manila envelope with 5 units of postage to Field Day Packet Request, ARRL, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111. Please allow 2-3 weeks for delivery.

If people wish to order display kits for their tables at Field Day, please contact Debra Johnson, K1DMJ, ARRL Education Manager, 225 Main St, Newington, CT 06111, tel 860-594-0296. The cost for the display kit ranges from $8-$12 depending on shipping. To ensure having the kits in time for Field Day, you are encouraged to order them no later than June 13.

2008 Field Day Logo: Ride the Waves

ARRL member Mary Von Lintig, KV2M, suggested the slogan for Field Day 2008: "Ride the Waves." A member of the South Jersey Radio Association, Von Lintig, inspired by the 2007 Field Day "bug" in last year's logo, enjoys VHF contesting and ARRL Sweepstakes and recently joined the Frankford Radio Club. "And, I like ARRL Field Day of course," she says. "I usually operate 21 hours of the event!" An avid portable radio operator, she has even been on-the-air while operating her lawnmower. "They also call me the YL on rollerblades." Mary and her husband Richard Van Lintig, KV2R, live in Voorhees, New Jersey. This year's logo was designed by ARRL Graphic Arts Supervisor Sue Fagan, KB1OKW, and Senior Technical Illustrator David Pingree, N1NAS.

Satellite Serves as Voice Repeater -- Uplinks on FM, Downlinks on Sideband

Launched in January 1990, AMSAT-OSCAR 16 (AO-16) -- a digital satellite -- has been unavailable for use while the command team dealt with a serious computer problem. The satellite has since been recovered, and is now a voice repeater, at least for an unspecified "test period" using FM voice on the uplink, but SSB voice on the downlink.

Since AO-16 was recovered approximately six months ago, the command team -- Bruce Rahn, WB9ANQ, Jim White, WD0E, and Mark Hammond, N8MH -- attempted to reload the satellite software almost a dozen times without success. The team performed a series of memory tests that pointed toward a hardware failure that prevented the spacecraft software from restarting successfully.

AMSAT Vice President of Operations Drew Glasbrenner, KO4MA, said, "After concluding that the spacecraft computer system was damaged, and as discussions about decommissioning were taking place, Jim recalled a series of low-level commands that Tom Clark, K3IO, included in the spacecraft design during construction. One of these commands allows an uplink receiver to be directly tied to a downlink transmitter. The twist is that the uplink is regular FM, but the downlink via the BPSK transmitter is DSB (Double Sideband). Mark placed the satellite

THE VVRC WELCOMES YOU

The Repeater is Published by the Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143, An ARRL Affiliated Club. Founded 1987, Chartered 1988 General Meetings: 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 PM 420 Vine Street Fire Station.

Wheelchair accessible

Visit the Repeater online courtesy of Bob K6HEW at:
http://users.cwnet.com/hewbob/vvrc
Club repeater in Vacaville:W6VVR 145.470 MHz(-) pl 127.3
Additional local repeaters
WV6F 224.200(-) WV6F 440.025(+) WV6F 1291.900(-)

in this mode early this week and did some testing."

Glasbrenner said the satellite hears very well; the reduced bandwidth by using either USB or LSB on the ground station receiver "allows for a very robust downlink. Tuning the downlink is just like on a linear transponder, meaning it is tight and with fast Doppler. Uplink tuning is not required, just as with the FM mode V/U satellites. My personal observations include being able to access and hear the satellite within one degree of the horizon, much lower than any other current bird for my location [in Florida]. This should be an easy satellite with omni antennas and a 70 cm preamp."

Glasbrenner said that he would like to open the satellite to general use for a test period. The uplink is 145.920 FM, and the downlink is 437.026 SSB +/- Doppler shift. He asks that users restrict their uplink power to a reasonable power level, and do not transmit without being able to hear the downlink; all general single-channel guidelines apply. Please submit reports via e-mail. "Enjoy this bird's new life!" Glasbrenner said.

---

59 Years Later, I found my Elmer

All of us at some time or another have been influenced by something in our youth. Perhaps it was a favorite car when you first started driving or maybe it was the glow of radio equipment in a ham shack. Whatever the experience, it helped shape your future and may have even led to a rewarding pastime or even a career.

One day while sitting at my desk in my shack I was listening to a QSO between W0PKN and another station I was unable to copy very well. The thing that caught my interest and took me away from what I was doing was the fact that the operator of the station in Kansas, Ernie Evans, W0PKN, mentioned that he used to live in Nutley, New Jersey. Why did that piece of trivia arouse my interest in this QSO? I was raised in Nutley, New Jersey so it was only natural for my ears to perk up when I heard mention of the town where I had spent most of my young life.

QSO to the Past

When Ernie finished his QSO with the other station, I had to give him a call and ask him just where in Nutley he had lived. After chatting with him for a while he mentioned he had another good friend who also lived in Nutley. He often helped him put up antennas and he keeps in touch to this day. The time frame was in the 1940s, when I was very young. I thought that having a best friend since the ’60s was something to boast about. A friendship that has lasted so long over so many miles is heartwarming.

Ernie mentioned what a great station his friend had and described where his friend lived. This is where the story really caught my interest. Ernie told me that Mike Ruggiero, W2NVR, lived in back of a big white house, in a small apartment on Centre Street across from Sadler Road. Having grown up in that exact area, my curiosity was piqued and I started asking more specific questions. As we talked about those years tears started to build up in my eyes. I was about to discover who was responsible for my life-long interest in and love of radio and electronics.

It turns out that Mike Ruggiero, W2NVR, was my Elmer. Although he never knew it until recently, Mike was the inspiration for me to become a ham. He was completely unaware of the influence he had on my life when I visited his station in 1947 at the age of three.

Huge Radios Stacked Floor to Ceiling

It all started one day when my Dad took me to see a neighbor of ours and to show me his radio station. As I mentioned I was very young at the time. When I walked into Mike’s home I was speechless, even though I remember being told I had a reputation, which I still live up to, for talking too much. Mike had a tremendous station for a ham by any standard in those days. The only thing I can think of that impressed me as much as Mike’s station is when I see the Maxim Memorial Station at ARRL headquarters, W1AW.

Radio equipment in those days was very big. Mike had so many radios that I couldn’t see them all at once. I saw huge radios lined up against the wall stacked from floor to ceiling. It was awesome to see the lights on the dials and meters, and to see and smell warm glowing tubes. I heard strange sounds from places I had never heard of. I couldn’t believe my eyes. I’m sure I looked very surprised to Mike and my Dad. Mike was extremely polite and knowledgeable. He explained many things but you have to understand, I was only three years old! Can you believe it? I can’t remember much else from those days but that station had quite an impact on me. Ever since that encounter, any time that I would see an old radio, whether it was at a flea market or anyplace else, I would remember the day that my father took me to meet Mike Ruggiero, W2NVR.

Bitten by the Bug

My interest increased day-by-day until I became interested in Short Wave Listening (SWL). Then my curiosity motivated me to try taking radios apart, a skill that I am still good at. Later I began listening late at night to distant AM broadcast stations. In the ‘60s I became interested in CB radio. Then, in the late ‘60s, I became interested in ham radio and eventually earned a license in 1970.

Now a ham for over 30 years, through the magic of ham radio I am re-introduced to the man who was responsible for it all. After that QSO, Ernie contacted Mike and told him of his find on the radio that day.

Memories Across the Airwaves

I have since been in contact with Mike and he has shared many memorable stories with me. During one conversation, he said “I often watched you playing in your backyard on Centre Street. Afterward your Mom would pick you up and toss you into the

bathtub to clean you up and get you ready for another session in the yard. Dave, your parents were super. Your mom was one of the sweetest, dearest women I have ever known. I had many a cup of coffee with your mom and dad and we would talk about everything until the late hours." This information is special to me since I lost my mom and dad many years ago. He also speaks of my brother Daniel, who has also passed. The thrill is indescribable and inspiring.

I feel very fortunate to have been reunited with Mike. Although we have not met in person we have been able to share some of the stories of my childhood almost 60 years later. I have to thank Ernie, W0PKN, for this reunion.

At 87, W2NVR is still active and operates from his modest station in southern New Jersey using a stealth antenna. I want to say thank you to Mike for memories that have lasted a lifetime and for influencing my life in ways that he could never have imagined in 1947. I joined the United States Air Force as a radio repairman because of the sense of wonder that I had when I saw all of Mike's radios. Ham radio, my career in electronics and my support of ARRL are all due to the impression that was made on me at the tender age of three. Thank you, Mike.

And thank you, Ernie, for having that unforgettable QSO with me on October 12, 2006 and for putting me in touch with the person who unknowingly had such a great influence on my life.

"Gentlemen...tonight we will begin the Malicious Interference Net with a round of anonymous whistling, followed by free style profanity. Remember...no call signs!"

PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

VACA VALLEY RADIO CLUB, INC.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM

Please Print & Fill in Completely — Dues are delinquent January 1st

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
Street: _____
City: _____Zip: _____
Phone: (_____) _____-_____OK to Publish ?(_____)
License Class: _____ ARRL Member ?(_____)
E-Mail Address_____

FAMILY Member (Spouse or Children)

Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)
Name: _____ Call Sign_____
License Class: _____ARRL Member ?(_____)

MEMBER Dues --------- $15.00 _____
Each Family Member -- $ 2.00 _____
Student ---------- $ 5.00 _____
Repeater/Autopatch donation --- _____
Call/Name badge -------- $10.00 _____
Optional ARRL membership
ARRL dues ---------- $39.00 _____
ARRL dues (Senior) ---- $36.00 _____
Senior is 65 yr or older with one time proof on age.

Total---------- _____
Paid by CASH: ____ Check #_____

Mail to : Vaca Valley Radio Club, PO Box 143, Elmira, CA 95625-0143